

The Tragedie of Hamlet

Ham. How long will a man lie i'th earth ere he rot?

Clow. Faith if a be not rotten before a die, as we haue many poe-  
kie corfes, that will scarce hold the laying in, a will last you some  
eight yeare, or nine yeare. A Tanner will last you nine yeare,

Ham. Why he more then another?

Clow. Why sir, his hide is so rand with his trade, that a will keepe  
out water a great while; & your water is a fore decayer of your whor-  
son dead body, heer's a scull now hath lye'n you i'th earth 23. yeares.

Ham. Whose was it?

Clow. A whorson mad fellowes it was, whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay I know not.

Clow. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue, a pour'd a flagon of  
Renish on my head once; this same skull sir, was sir *Yoricks* skull, the  
Kings iester.

Ham. This?

Clow. Een that.

Ham. Alas poore *Yoricke*, I knew him *Horatio*, a fellow of infinite  
iest, of most excelent fancy, hee hath bore me on his backe a thou-  
sand times, and now how abhorred in my imagination it is: my gorge  
rises at it. Here hung those lypes that I haue kist I know not how  
oft: where be your gibes now? your gambles, your songs, your fla-  
shes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roare, not one  
now to mocke your owne grinning, quite chopfalne. Now get you  
to my Ladies table, and tell her, let her paint an inch thicke, to this fa-  
uour she must come, make her laugh at that.

Prethee *Horatio* tell me one thing.

Hora. What's that my Lord?

Ham. Doo'st thou thinke *Alexander* lookt a this fashion i'th earth?

Hora. Een so.

Ham. And smelt so: pah.

Hora. Een so my Lord.

Ham. To what base vses we may returne *Horatio*? Why may not  
imagination trace the noble dust of *Alexander*, till a find it stopping  
a bung-hole?

Hora. Twere to consider too curiously to consider so.

Ham. No faith, not a iot, but to follow him thether with modesty  
enough, and likelihood to leade it. *Alexander* died, *Alexander* was  
buried, *Alexander* returneth to dust, the dust is earth, of earth wee  
make Lome, & why of that Lome whereto he was conuerted, might  
they

Prince of Denmarke.

They not stoppe a Beare-barrell?

Impeious *Caesar* dead, and turn'd to Clay,  
Might stoppe a hole, to keepe the wind away.

O that that earth which kept the world in awe,  
Shoulp patch a wall t' expell the waters flaw.

But soft, but soft awhile, here comes the King,  
The Queene, the courtiers, who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? this doth betoken,  
The corse they follow, did with desprat hand

Foredoe it owne life, twas of some estate,  
Couch we a while and marke.

Laer. What Ceremony else?

Ham. That is *Laertes* a very noble youth, make.

Laer. What Ceremony else?

Dost. Her obsequies haue beene as farre enlarg'd

As we haue warranty, her death was doubtfull,  
And but that great command ore-swayes the order,

She should in ground vnsanctified beene lodg'd

Till the last trumpet: for charitable prayers,

Flints and peebles should be throwne on her:

Yet heere she is allow'd her virgin Crants,

Her mayden strewments, and the bringing home  
Of bell and buriall.

Laer. Must there no more be doone?

Dost. No more be doone.

We should prophane the seruice of the dead,

To sing a Requiem and such rest to her

As to peace-parted soules.

Laer. Lay her i'th earth,

And from her faire and vnpolluted flesh

May Violets spring: I tell thee churlish Priest,

A ministring Angell shall my sister be

When thou lyest howling.

Ham. What, the faire *Ophelia*.

Quee. Sweets to the sweet, farewell,

I hop't thou should'st haue beene my *Hamlets* wife,

I thought thy bride-bed to haue deckt sweet maide,

And not haue strew'd thy graue.

Laer. O trebble woe

Enter King  
Quee. *Laertes*  
and the corse.